

# IDDLE MINGLISH

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A Short Play

By

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The Characters:  
MAN ONE  
TAN MOO  
JEFFINER

The Play:

(A space. A moment.

MAN ONE enters. Trying to get his bearings,  
looking around)

MAN ONE:

Wasn't I just...? Didn't I...? I'm sure I... But... Hello?  
Helloooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!?

Gotta think. I was... I was looking for...

A parking space! Yes! I was looking for, and I found a parking space!  
Yes! A parking space! Jennifer was yelling at me, and—

(Sees something)

What the...?

(Bends down to pick it up: it's a crude wooden  
sword)

Man, I gotta switch to decaf. Think. Okay. I was with Jennifer. And I did,  
or said something. What was it? What did I...? Oh God, it must have  
been bad. Whatever it was, I'm sorry. Jennifer? Jennifer!  
Helloooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo?!

(Looks at the sword in his hand)

This thing is made of plywood.

(TAN MOO enters, opposite. He is in a kerfluffle.  
When he sees MAN ONE he lets fly a moist cry of  
anguish:)

TAN MOO:

Hoo!!!

MAN ONE (jumps, startled):

Jesus!

TAN MOO (rushes to him):

Why mife! Why mife! Ky fant ind why mife!

(Grabs MAN ONE, with growing desperation.  
MAN ONE begins backing away, confused and  
frightened)

Sav who heen sir? He shaz hack blair, een gries, footible een gries, and,  
and, and feckles on her frace! Vuch a veet swoice. Hainty dands. A  
swinning mile. Oh, sees sho footible, sho footible. Ky fant hind er! Melp  
hee! Gore Fod's cake, melp hee! Tease plell me soov heen er. Tease.  
Tease.

(MAN ONE disengages himself. TAN MOO  
waxes bellicose)

Dut yave hoo won hith der?

MAN ONE:

What?

TAN MOO:

Hut whave doo won dith why mife! Boo yastard! Yile ill koo! Ill koo!

(Sees another wooden sword)

Swook! A lord!

(Picks it up, faces MAN ONE)

Might fee!

MAN ONE:

Stop.

TAN MOO:

Might fee, coo yilthy foward!

(Feints at him. MAN ONE dodges away)

MAN ONE:

Stop! For God's sake, this is insane. There's been some kind of  
misunderstanding. I don't know what you're upset about, but I'm sure we  
can work it out. We just need to...talk. Okay? Talk? Work it out? Smile  
on your brother, everybody get together?

TAN MOO (after a beat):  
But yare hoo balking atout?

MAN ONE:  
I don't understand.

TAN MOO (overlapping):  
Die ont stunderand.

MAN ONE and TAN MOO:  
Huh?

MAN ONE:  
Let's just... put the swords down. Like this.

(Carefully places his sword on the floor)

See? No swords.

(TAN MOO hesitates, then follows suit)

Thank you. I think it's wrong when our first impulse, when humans don't understand each other, is to swick up a, pick up a sword.

Do you... speak English? Inglés? Anglais? Speak it? Do you?

TAN MOO (stares blankly)

MAN ONE:  
Where are we? Dondé... us, here, aqui? Where are we?

TAN MOO:  
Ere ware whee?

MAN ONE:  
Yes. Where are we?

TAN MOO (looks around):  
Ee har... weer.

MAN ONE:  
Yes, but where is here? How do we get out of here? How. Do. We.  
Get. Out. Of. Here?

TAN MOO:  
Out huv ear?

MAN ONE:

Yes! Let's get the hell out huv ear. Which way. Wich... whey.

TAN MOO:

Wich whey?

MAN ONE:

Wich whey.

TAN MOO (thinks for a moment, then points):

Wat they. Yo.

Wat they. Ness. Yo.

Wat they.

MAN ONE:

Are you sure?

TAN MOO:

Hut?

MAN ONE:

Do you mind...? Can I ask, I'm just curious. What language, lutt whanguage... spoo doo eak?

TAN MOO (the silliest question ever):

Iddle minglish.

MAN ONE:

Iddle, middle... Oh, God help me!

All right. Look. Guy. I came from this way. And you came this way.

TAN MOO:

Wiss they.

MAN ONE:

Yes.

TAN MOO:

Ness?

MAN ONE:

What? Yes? No?

TAN MOO:

Yo?

MAN ONE:

Or is yo no and ness yes? Or ness no and yo yes? Dodd gam it!

(TAN MOO snatches up his sword, points it at  
MAN ONE. MAN ONE backs away)

TAN MOO:

Lie ont dyke it yen who lose the nord's lame vin aim. Sits an inn.

MAN ONE:

I won't do it again. I apologize.

TAN MOO:

Who'll hoe to gell.

MAN ONE:

Please put the sword down. We mustn't... Me wusn't... swick up pords...  
tevery ime... we want to... communicate.

TAN MOO:

Communicate?

MAN ONE:

Tacuminate.

(TAN MOO suddenly hugs MAN ONE)

TAN MOO:

Bry mother.

(MAN ONE extricates himself)

MAN ONE:

We gotta figure this out. I was with my wife, with Jennifer, we were  
fighting, and I have to find her, I have to tell her I'll never fight with her  
again. It's the most important thing ever. I love her.

TAN MOO (after a beat):

Hut?

MAN ONE:

My wife. Why mife.

TAN MOO:

Why mas ith why mife!

MAN ONE:

Great. That's just great. We were with our wives. See? That's something we share.

TAN MOO:

Jeffiner.

MAN ONE:

What? Hut?

TAN MOO:

Why mife niz aimed Jeffiner.

MAN ONE:

Jeffiner? War yife?

TAN MOO (nods):

Jeffiner.

MAN ONE:

What a coincidence. My wife is Jennifer.

(Hesitates. Then, with trepidation)

Do you have, hoo doo yave a photo, a gotophragh of Jeffiner?

(TAN MOO opens his wallet, shows it to MAN ONE. MAN ONE stiffens)

TAN MOO:

Shisn't ee footible? Lye huv sir oh.

MAN ONE:

That's, that's my wife. Why mife.

TAN MOO:

Yo.

MAN ONE:

Ness. Jennifer.

TAN MOO:

Jeffiner.

(MAN ONE takes out his wallet, shows TAN MOO a picture)

MAN ONE:  
Why mife.

(They stare at the photos, then at each other.  
 Taut beat. Then, simultaneously, they snatch up  
 the swords)

Ill koo.

TAN MOO:  
 Dite to the feth.

MAN ONE:  
 You sheece of pit.

TAN MOO (howls in rage):  
 Aaaaaaaaaaaaaagggggggggggghhhhhhhhhhh!!!

(They engage in a spirited thwackfight, the length  
 of which depends on timing issues. Finally, MAN  
 ONE is able to knock TAN MOO's sword out of  
 his hand. He stands over him with the tip of his  
 own sword pointed at TAN MOO's throat)

Mill key. Mill key.

MAN ONE:  
 God, you're pathetic. I've never had a sword in my hand before today and  
 I still beat you.

(TAN MOO begins crying)

Stop blubbering.

(A WOMAN enters, opposite, sees what's  
 happening, freezes. MAN ONE puts the wooden  
 blade to TAN MOO's throat)

If you don't show me how to get out of here ky ill yill koo.

TAN MOO (groans, trembles)

WOMAN (reacts)

MAN ONE (sees her):  
 Jen? Oh, thank God. Jen.

(Rushes to her)

MAN ONE, con't:

This has been the weirdest day of my life. I think I must've gotten hit on the head, or something. God, you look good. You're beautiful.

Listen. I have one thing to say, and it's the most important idea I've ever expressed, and this, simply: I love you. I am going to spend the rest of my life with you. I love you. I love you.

Jennifer?

(TAN MOO gets up and limps to the WOMAN)

TAN MOO:

Jeffiner?

(The WOMAN stares at MAN ONE, then at TAN MOO. There is a very long moment. Finally:

JEFFINER (to MAN ONE):

Oo yar whoo?

MAN ONE:

What? What?

TAN MOO:

Heat swart.

JEFFINER:

Baby!

(They rush into each other's arms. After an exuberant embrace, they exit.

Long moment. MAN ONE begins to tremble. He kneels and places the tip of the sword against his breast. As he prepares to fall on it,)

THE PLAY ENDS